

the space between the huts, neatly smeared with dung, separated off 351
 from the next by a low wall, sometimes less than a foot high, or the
 remains of what was once a wall. Not all villages give an appearance of
 neatness. Sometimes, especially after a rainy season, the huts are dilapi-
 dated and greatly in need of repair; courtyards may be untidy-looking and
 only partially smeared, while often in summer flies are a veritable pest. 825
 It is considered unlucky to kill them. Native ideas of cleanliness also 515
 differ from those of Europeans: it is considered nothing for a baby to
 urinate on the hut floor, while hours spent in smoky huts give the cloths
 and blankets worn by women an unpleasant odour. Each household, the 592
 domain of a married woman, is independent, having its own fields and
 granaries. The household of the chief wife is opposite the main entrance;
 on either side of her in Raselaka's village are her two fellow wives;
 further to her left are the households of an orphaned sister's son to the
 village head, married to one of his daughters, and of his eldest son, whose
 wife is still cooking for her mother-in-law and has as yet no cooking hut.
 To the right, beyond the third wife of Raselaka, lives a stranger, Letasula,
 with his wife and mother. There is an extra hut for the young boys of
 the village and one behind the rest belonging to a woman 'married' to the
 second wife of Raselaka. The Lovedu have no ranking of wives apart 595
 from the chief wife (the mother's brother's daughter) and there is no
 division of the village into right- and left-hand sides as among Zulu.

There are well marked differences even on the outside between cooking 342
 and sleeping or reception huts. The latter all face the *khoro* and have a
 wooden door; they are well plastered, many having a veranda all round.
 The former have their backs to the *khoro*, a framework of reeds as a door,
 and are more roughly made, very often unplastered on the outside, so
 that the framework of wooden posts is clearly visible. On entering a sleep-
 ing hut, you find yourself in a pleasing apartment. The floor, the greater
 portion of which is generally to the level of a foot higher than that of the
 entrance, is well smeared, while beside the wall are one or two raised 352
 platforms used to place things on and sometimes also as seats. The well-
 plastered walls merge into the roof, forming a white dome. This dome
 has circular ribs marking the cross-laths which, beneath the plaster, hold
 together the framework of closely packed rafters. Sometimes there are 353
 mural decorations and at intervals an outjutting shelf of clay or a peg.
 The floor of the hut of Raselaka is empty except for a double or waisted
 basket (*Miradumane*), a wooden platter of food, a lantern, and two smart 373
 suitcases. But on the shelves are blankets, a rolled-up sleeping-mat, some
 clothes and beadwork of the wife, and on the walls a calendar and a
 coloured picture of the King and Queen of England. You must not expect
 to find this latter sophistication in many villages, but likewise the smooth,
 plastered dome is now uncommon. New Government regulations against
 the cutting of trees for wood, and the men's general disinclination
 to put much work into a building they will inhabit only at intervals,
 between periods of service in the towns, are combining with other factors
 to doom to extinction these beautifully made huts. That of Letasula,
 newer than the others, is an ordinary *rusadwele* with unplastered roof and
 supporting beams. He had a European bed, but has discarded it as too
 cold in winter.

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in effective check the tendency for people to move away after every 36/
 quarrel or accusation of witchcraft, villages were not only appreciably 17/
 larger than to-day but also somewhat differently arranged, with both
 courtyard and cattle-kraal in the centre. Wherever possible the Sotho
 build on mountains, which are covered with a rich, loamy soil well
 suited to cultivation, are less fever-ridden than the valleys, and in the
 old days afforded better protection against enemies. Indeed, it is not
 until recent times that the valleys have been opened up even for
 agriculture. Within the village each married woman generally has [592] •
 two huts, kitchen- and sleeping-hut, while one or more fenced-in
 sections near the hedge are devoted to the storage of mealies on the
 cob and beer-making activities.

TRIBAL ECONOMY. The tribes of the Lowveld are predominantly 24/
 agricultural, possessing on the whole few cattle. Milk, which many 23/
 adults find nauseating, plays a very minor part in their diet, milk taboos [262]
 are unknown while the meat sacrifice is rare, beer taking its place. As
 among Venda and the Sotho of the Highveld, women are not as
 strictly excluded from contact with cattle as among the Nguni; not [462]
 only is it common for girls to herd cattle in the absence of boys in
 town or at the circumcision school, but many women also possess
 cattle in their own right. While it would be impossible here to give 24/
 a full account of Lowveld agriculture, it is of interest to enumerate
 some of its more salient aspects. Men take a considerable part in
 agricultural activities, every married man having one large field for
 which he is responsible. But while women plant every kind of crop,
 men grow and reap only mealies, grain crops, and sugar-cane; pump-
 kins, beans, ground- and monkey-nuts, &c., are considered as purely
 a woman's concern. In our area, as elsewhere, these crops are mostly
 planted together in the same field, mealies predominating in some
 parts, kaffir-corn or millet being the chief crop in others. Partly as a
 result of congestion and partly in order to take advantage of differential
 climatic conditions as between mountain and valley, fields of any one
 family are generally very widely scattered, being sometimes as much
 as ten miles apart. Recognition of the food value of various wild fruit [685]
 trees, such as the morula and wild fig, is shown by the fines attached
 to cutting them without special permission. An interesting feature

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- 613 The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term mo/balo cr
[602] lelele which is in common use referring to the group of agnates as well as to the relatives on the mother's side of the family.
- [789] The lineage segment of four to five generations tracing its descent from a common male ancestor (grandfather of the adult males) shares a common major shrine and occasionally meets at the harvest thanksgiving or when a mekhelo (a gathering of the descendants of a particular common ancestor) is indicated by the diviner as the wish of a troublesome spirit.
- [592] Such a group of agnates of four to five generations in depth tends to be concentrated in the same locality and in many cases may be found in the same homestead (moete). As neighbours [476] and relatives they share in many common activities, such as helping in each other's work-parties, taking part in girls' puberty ceremonies, consulting each other in the marriage of their sons and daughters. Only in the minimal lineage of father and sons are there jural ties. The lineage is not a land-owning unit, has no political functions, is not exogamous, marriage within the lineage being common especially in the Lobedu royal group.
- [562] An interesting feature of the Lobedu lineage is the important part played by its women who continue even after marriage to be active in lineage affairs as leaders in religious ritual and as [590] guardians over their brothers' households. The merging of the [649] ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family which results from preferential marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter and the inclusion in ancestor worship of relatives on both sides, which will be described later, also affect 613 the character of the lineage. A religious gathering (mekhelo) of 769 the descendants of Sekhobo which I attended showed the lineage segment of five generations in operation and illustrated [602] some of these points. Descendants through both sons and daughters in the line of Sekhobo's chief wife took part in the ceremony and, in addition to calling upon the deceased father and other male ascendants of the head of the lineage, the officiator mentioned by name also the deceased father's uterine sisters and the father's mother. The inclusion of the father's mother was all the more remarkable because this was a gathering of the descendants of Sekhobo and it had been the specific complaint of the troubling ancestor that every year harvest beer was being offered to the spirits on the father's mother's

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother⁶¹³ had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection²⁶⁹ which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which⁵⁷² was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to⁶¹³ the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on⁶⁰² matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not⁵⁷¹ emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mokhobo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a⁵⁹² typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good⁵⁷¹ deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly⁴³³ on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to⁴²⁵ individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are⁴³⁴ inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as⁴²⁸ they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the⁴⁵⁴ district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send 584
her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that
her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest
half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter
with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic inde- 583
pendence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose 602
bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies
a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even
before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with
the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead
where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their
special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she
will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut
of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer
there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties
held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called
in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that
'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically 709
protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in
a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead
she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot 586
chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his
action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take
her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if
he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her
son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her 729
sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for 726
her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart'
this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother
to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for 592 ●
it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches 571
full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth
of a new unit which may become in time an independent
homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible
at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

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- 592 often, if at all, only after the death of both the father and his
571 heir, the eldest brother who succeeded him as head of the
homestead. Full independence is not an ideal that is striven
for.

592 In its early stages the new unit or incipient 'house' is still
571 dependent on the bridegroom's natal house (house of orienta-
593 tion). The new bride works for her mother-in-law. She has no
606 fields of her own to begin with, no utensils, nor a hearth and
very often not even a sleeping hut of her own, the young couple
using the mother-in-law's sleeping hut while she sleeps in her
kitchen hut. The bride cooks on her husband's mother's hearth,
works with her husband in a field allocated to them and helps
her mother-in-law in hers. The husband will, if he has not
done so before bringing his bride home, build her a new hut
after the marriage at any time convenient to him. Simeon
made sun-dried bricks himself, paid one pound to have the
walls built, had a work-party for the framework of the roof
and did the thatching himself. A man's father may help him
but usually a young man uses his own money earned by previous
migrant labour.

A woman cooks for her mother-in-law until a new bride,
either of her husband's brother or of her husband arrives when
she may be given her own pots. When Simeon's second wife
arrived both wives cooked together for the mother-in-law for a
while. Then when they began to disagree one (the younger
one in this case because she was unrelated) was given her own
pots to cook separately. Being given her own hearth is an
important thing in a woman's married life marked by a little
ceremony and a visit home to announce her new status. Even
when she has her own hearth, however, she must continue to
provide food for her parents-in-law. Children are thus an
insurance against old age and it is the duty and responsibility
of a son, more particularly the youngest son, to care for his
mother in her old age. The father may have young wives to
care for him when his elder sons are married.

- 593 Even after his marriage a man remains under the jural control
571 of, and subordinate to, his father. Only after his father's death
571 is he free to choose whether to remain in the village under the
heir or to hive off. Sometimes, though rarely, a married son
does, however, quarrel with his father and move away. Mostly

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such a quarrel involves the mother rather than the son and the whole house hives off, the son taking his mother with him. ⁵⁹³
⁵⁷¹
⁵⁷¹

The birth of the first child is an important step in the development of a house. The Lobedu child is born in a homestead ⁵⁹² in which there are at least three generations represented—that ⁵⁷¹ of the grandmother, that of the parents, including usually also the father's brothers and unmarried sisters and that of his own contemporaries. The first child is tended largely by the father's mother while the mother goes about the hard work of stamping, working in the fields, fetching firewood if there are no young sisters of the husband to help, and cooking. ⁶⁰³
⁶⁰²

The husband's mother is an essential part of the household and has a dominating influence. She controls and advises her son, especially in regard to his relations with his wife and the needs of his children, and he usually defers to her knowledge and experience. Long after her sons are married and even when they have grandchildren the unit is known as her *mosha* (house). It would seem that a unit of husband, wife and child would hardly be viable in a subsistence economy based predominantly on the agricultural activities of the women. Even the smallest Lobedu homestead includes the husband's mother. It is only when there are several adolescent children or the cash earnings of the husband enable a wife to buy the staple food instead of relying wholly upon what she grows herself that smaller units can survive. Even then they generally live near, and attach themselves to, some relative.

Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother ⁵⁹² to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between ⁵⁷¹ them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts ⁶⁰² to the sister's son (*muduhulu*) who often goes to stay for a while ⁶⁰⁴ with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people.

The marriage of the first daughter brings about the first ⁵⁹² acquisition by the developing house of a large amount of ⁵⁷¹ property in bride-price and ensures, even in the absence of ⁶⁰⁶ sons, the continuation of the house. As important is the fact

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- 592 that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for
 571 economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she
 606 needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirela* for her son-in-
 law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return
 for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirela*
 may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for
 [602] he also is a *muduhulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines
 for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become
 involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage
 of her daughter is also very important for a different reason.
 This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For
 on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in
 addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden
 work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the
 bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the
 most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.
- 592 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing
 571 over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed
 by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes
 over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which
 the house achieves its final independence economically (though
 not ritually).
- 613 It is interesting to note that Lovedu do not, like the Zulu,
 562 identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

- 748 On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs
 593 of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any
 [602] complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make
 them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine
 sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family.
- [583] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter
 of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and
 the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the
 daughters of this woman to obtain wives.
- 768 When a married woman dies leaving very young children
 they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her
 sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succes-
 sion leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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wife also died, he sent the children to her sister to be reared and ⁷⁶⁸ gave her his deceased's wife's fields to cultivate to provide food for the children. When they are big they will be brought back ⁵⁹² with a gift of beer and their father will give a thanking gift of ⁷³¹ an ox or money for the rearing of the children.

The utensils of a deceased wife remain in her hut to be used ⁴²⁸ by her children or son's wives; and her eldest son has the right ⁷⁶⁸ to inherit her fields. Until twenty years ago when it was still ⁵⁹² the custom for a mother to receive a cow and calf on the marriage of her daughter (if a virgin) in recognition of having reared her, this portion of the bride-price was the special inheritance of the youngest son with whom she generally lived until her death.

When the father of a polygynous family or the head of a homestead dies there is, owing to the property arrangements characteristic of the Lovedu and their attitude to its possession, never a great deal of heritable property. The property of each house is inherited by the eldest son of that house. The heir to ⁵⁹² the position of head of the homestead is the eldest son of the chief wife. Only he or the uterine brothers of his father are responsible for his father's debts—not the sons of other houses. It is generally stated in discussions that any cattle or goods acquired by the father as his personal possessions should be inherited by the chief son and heir. In practice it is more common to divide out such property among all the sons and daughters.

When Ramalepe, a rain doctor, died about three years ago all his cattle and goods were divided equally among his sons. His rain medicines and his field went to his chief wife's son; his mealies (from his own field) were equally divided between his wives and his uterine sisters. When Philip's father died there was no sister of his father still living so Philip went to the queen and asked her what to do. She told him to call his sisters and to divide out the property in consultation with them. He then called his sisters (eldest and other daughters of his father) and showed them the property—thirty-six goats. They agreed on dividing the goats as follows: the deceased's two elder daughters by his first wife were given ten goats each; Philip, a son by the second wife, received eight; Mutzere, sister's son to deceased, was given one goat to kill and eat at his home; one goat was

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new home-⁶³⁴stead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter,⁵⁶² a married woman who does not live in the area was made⁸²⁹ official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from⁸⁰⁷ the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting⁸⁹² cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable⁶⁰⁴ as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's⁶³⁴ brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to⁶⁴³ succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is somewhat different. There is a Lovedu proverb saying '*Bya thoga monye bo dula muduhulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run. ⁶³⁴
⁶⁰²

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging⁵⁹² to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance⁵⁹² of being independent are found upon investigation to be portion⁵⁹¹ (a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become⁵⁹¹ separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels⁵⁷⁷ between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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572
 591 woman, K, has, during her husband's prolonged absence in a
 571 labour centre, moved away from her fellow wives into another
 1764 district in order to be near her married daughter. She lives in a
 571 small homestead with her married son, who is absent doing
 571 migrant labour, and her other children. In contrast to this is
 the homestead of a neighbour of hers who has five wives and

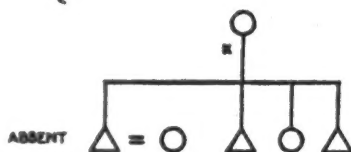


FIG. 5. Composition of a very small homestead.

whose ten brothers together with their wives and children still live with him in the homestead—a total of sixty-eight inmates (twenty-nine adults, thirty-nine children). Of these three married and two unmarried men are away doing migrant labour.

The domestic group indicated in Figure 6 originally lived in one homestead.

On A's death his chief son, B, inherited his youngest wife (No. 3) who as yet had no children. They all moved out of the old homestead, the sons (B and D) of A's two elder wives

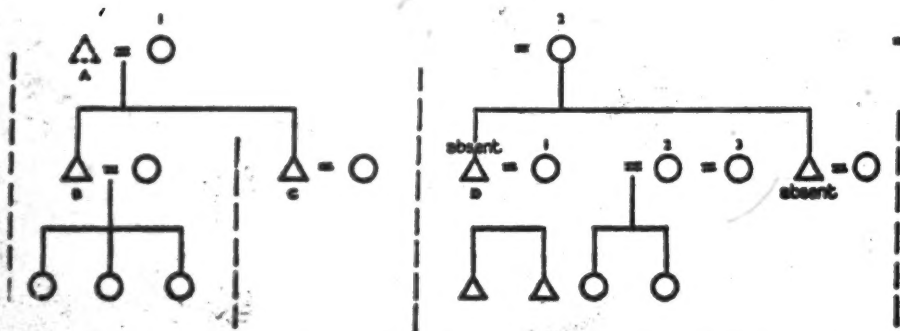


FIG. 6. Segmentation of a homestead on 'house' lines.

building separate homesteads next to one another, where I found them in 1938. The women in the homestead of D considered themselves part of the homestead of A and in the

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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported every-592
 thing that took place to B. Later C moved away from his 591
 uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate home-571
 steads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though
 uterine brothers living together after the death of their father
 also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an 572
 accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation
 as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary:
 Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district head-
 man, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made
 headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim;
 Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with 571
 his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that
 someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping
 that a change would improve his condition. After many years
 in a different district, he returned to live in the original home-
 stead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father 572
 unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are 571
 involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian
 girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring
 about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may
 live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of
 the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested,
 the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses'
 move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated
 before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come
 with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to
 live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close
 religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation.
 Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there
 may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much
 consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable
 over long periods and there is a great value attached to remain-
 ing together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the 572
 gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of 573
 602

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592 its males is counter-balanced by a 'knitting' together of the
 593 men with their sisters who have married out and a strengthen-
 603 ing of their ties with their maternal kin by means of preferential
 [597] marriage supported by cattle links. This process is illustrated
 in Figure 9.

582 The proportion of mother's brother's daughter marriages in
 its various forms to the total number of marriages among two
 generations of members of a large lineage which was analysed
 in detail (counting the marriage of each woman in a polygynous
 union as a separate marriage) was 34 per cent, of which
 91 per cent were marriages with the mother's uterine brother
 and its derivations. If married men were to be considered,
 the proportion would be higher, 63 per cent of the married
 men having contracted at least one mother's brother's daughter
 marriage; 80 per cent of these were (or were based on) marriage
 with the mother's uterine brother's daughter. This tallies with
 a random sample of 100 cases taken in 1936 in the royal area
 (excluding the Capital itself) in which 67 per cent of the married
 men were found to have married a mother's brother's daughter.

582 But the situation had materially altered by 1962 when a similar
 598 sample of 243 cases in the same area showed mother's brother's
 daughter marriages to have decreased from 67 per cent to
 34 per cent. Of these 94 per cent were with the mother's
 uterine brother or his descendants, which indicates that despite
 strong forces making for change and increased opportunities
 for contacts with strangers of the opposite sex which have
 greatly diminished marriage with distant maternal kin, the
 values attached to 'knitting' together close relatives are still
 [177] strong. The most potent forces at work for breaking down
 preferential marriage are Christianity, which condemns it and
 school education which by inculcating Western values makes
 preferential marriage unthinkable to any school child today
 however short a period he has spent at school.

581 That men consciously use marriage to keep alive family
 582 relationships and that they are deeply concerned about these
 602 alliances, can be seen from the case of Modidi (M) in Figure 7.

M's homestead abutted on that of V, whose half-sister K he
 had married (see Figure 7). When they were both old. M took
 his granddaughter L, (his son by V's half-sister K having died
 years before) to his friend V saying, 'I see we are in danger of

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603 is thought to be so deeply attached to her daughter's children
 769 that she is always troubling them—wanting them to be named
 after her, to be given her beads to wear, to have a dedicated
 [278] goat or shrine set up. One therefore sometimes finds three or
 four shrines in a homestead.

The Local Group

621 The local group reflects the balance that is achieved among
 602 the Lobedu between agnates on the one hand, and on the other,
 relatives on the mother's side and affines (one and the same
 thing depending on the generation from which they are
 viewed).

621 A random group of thirteen homesteads forming a neighbour-
 592 hood, is shown in Figure 8. They are closely linked by agnatic,
 602
 571

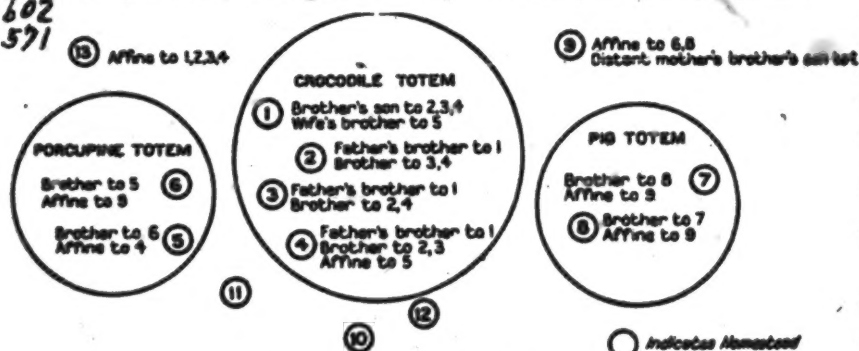


FIG. 8. Agnatic, cognatic and affinal ties in a neighbourhood.

cognatic and affinal ties and share in many economic, ritual and recreational activities.

These homesteads fall into three main clusters of agnates belonging to the Crocodile, Porcupine and Pig totems near which are two homesteads No. 9 and No. 13, which have affinal and cognatic links with these clusters, and three unrelated homesteads, Nos. 10, 11 and 12, the last-named being foreigners, Tsonga, who had little to do with the rest.

The Crocodile cluster (homesteads 1, 2, 3 and 4) had originally been a single homestead which had broken up on the death of the father, head of the district. Other close agnates lived a little further off, not shown on the diagram. This cluster

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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 12: a sister of 621/ the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 582 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they 602 had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were 571 related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group.

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with 621/ each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly 602 when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift- 43/ exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head 476 of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from 273 Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*moloko*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were 445 ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kafir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*baduhulu*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the 272 ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the 574 success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment.